

# She's sure to get mail — she has her own post office

By Ann Jardine Bardsley

Deseret News staff writer

Eloese K. Stireman had been an employee of the U.S. Postal Service for more than 23 years. Because she had advanced as far as she could in her department and because her responsibilities were curtailed after she filed a grievance (and won her first trial) she said to herself, "Hey, there's a better world out there. I think I'll start my own post office."

With that proclamation two years ago, Mrs. Stireman opened Sentry Mail Boxes, Etc. "It's that etcetera that counts," she says with a wink.

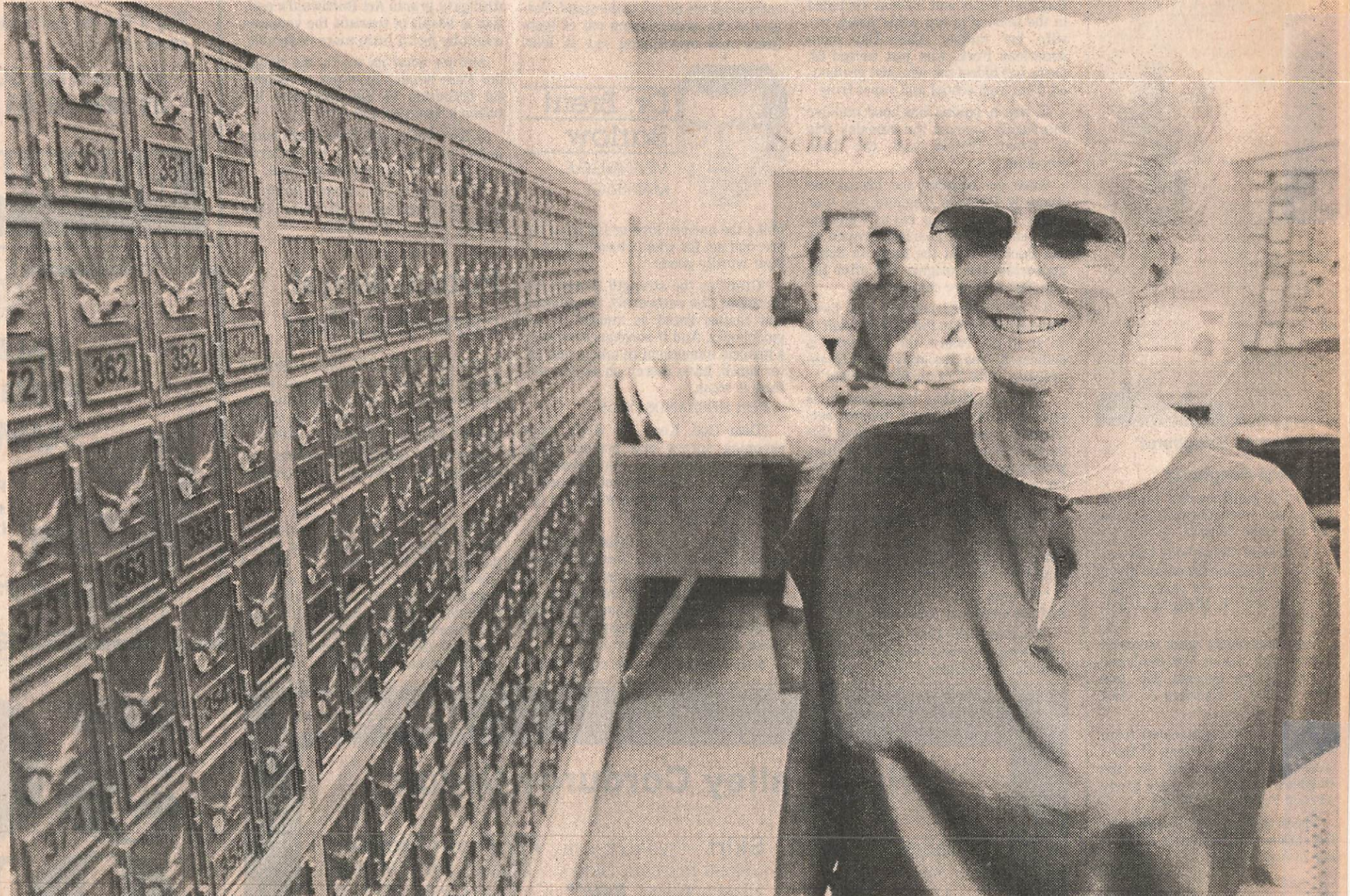
In addition to offering 400 post office cubbyholes for letters and parcels (that go for \$5 to \$10 a month depending on the size), Mrs. Stireman sells business cards, stationery, post office banks, wedding invitations, rubber stamps and keys from her shop, located at 2586 West 4700 South, Westwood Village.

If a special card or letter is being sent, Mrs. Stireman might ask, "Does this warrant a love stamp?" Chatting with customers and giving them mailing information — such as what's cheapest, what's fastest and what needs to be insured — has also won affection for her. Mrs. Stireman gives her clients free publicity by posting dozens of colored calling cards on a bulletin board in the 900-square-foot office.

When customers call to inquire if they have any mail, Mrs. Stireman checks their boxes and even tells them what kind of mail it is.

Because she operates a mail receiving agency or a private post office, the former chemistry teacher says she can provide these extra services. "Our customers say, 'What don't you do?' and I say 'Well if you think of it maybe we'll do it tomorrow,'" she says.

Mrs. Stireman also operates a 24-hour answering service. Her deep soft "helllllooooo" has become a familiar sound to her answering service customers. During the day she and her husband, Ray, a Kennecott retiree, answer phones at the Sentry Mail offices. At night the answering service is transferred to their home. She says they are only awakened after 11 p.m. on the average of once a week. When the Stiremans need to leave the business or home, calls are transferred to trained employees.



Eloese K. Stireman, who worked for the U.S. Postal Service for more than 23 years, now has her own post office.

PHOTOGRAPHY/ GERALD SILVER



"I answer phones for some of my clients and leave messages in their mail boxes," Mrs. Stireman says.

"I don't think of myself as an extension of the U.S. Postal Service. I merely help them out. There are not enough post office boxes. My customers sign an agreement that designates me as their agent to handle their mail. I can provide more services than the postal service. I call the P.O. boxes 'mail boxes,' " she says, adding that instead of being addressed to a "P.O. Box" number, letters are addressed to a "suite" or "apartment" number. Mrs. Stireman follows all postal rules, which include

guarding the sanctity and security of the mail.

Although her services appeal to many kinds of people, Mrs. Stireman says job hunters with no phone and the small independent businessman working out of his home are especially attracted to her business. "The independent business person needs the box and someone to answer the phones while he's out. A lot of these business people have a business license at this address," she says. For them she provides a room with a desk and chair, filing cabinet, typewriter, phone and copy machine. "They

can talk to their clients right here.

"The people we've met and the range of clients is remarkable. We have private detectives (they're the ones who might wake you up during the night) and doctors and dentists. I'm almost a full-time secretary/receptionist for people," Mrs. Stireman says.

Mrs. Stireman offers notarizing services, and United Parcel Service and Federal Express both deliver to Sentry Mail. "We'll do anything a post office will almost without ex-

ception, but anything coming in from the postal service is just that — a service and not a money-making endeavor," the owner says. For now, Mrs. Stireman deposits all outgoing mail each night at the main post office on Redwood Road and 21st South. "When my volume warrants it, I can be a pick up station."

In its two years, the business has grown and regular foot traffic now enlivens the establishment. Operating Sentry Mail Boxes, Etc. keeps the couple busy, Stireman says.

Is the business profitable? Mrs. Stireman

says if every one of the 400 boxes was filled and every one of those customers subscribed to the answering service she would gross about \$44,000 a year. "But we don't. That's the figure that was projected when we first opened. But I've got to make that come true.

"We're doing well. I wouldn't tell anyone who didn't have *good* financial backing to go into a private post office. We don't need to make any money — and we didn't for a while. But we have more business than we can handle," Mrs. Stireman says.

# Rural postmasters protesting proposal to close small offices

*Tues 16 July 1985*

BOISE (AP) — A Grace Commission recommendation to save \$272 million over a three-year period by closing small post offices has prompted concern among some rural postmasters in Idaho.

Postmasters in rural towns such as Culdesac, Ahsahka, and Elk City say the closing of the local post office could mean the end of a community.

Postmaster Betty J. Nitzi says there's no way Elk City could survive without a post office. "We're 60 miles away from another town."

The effect of post office closures would be "devastating," said Elizabeth Heimgartner, postmaster at Juliaetta. "There just wouldn't be a town anymore."

The Grace Commission is a group of business leaders and professionals asked by President Reagan to eliminate waste and inefficiency in the federal government. The commission was chaired by J. Peter Grace, chairman and chief executive officer of W.R. Grace & Co., a business management consulting firm.

More than 12,000 small post offices across the United States could be closed if the commission's suggestion to replace "limited mail service offices with alternative ser-

vices" is adopted.

"They're always trying to do this," said Violet D. Harrell, who, as postmaster at Ahsahka for 11 years and postal employee for 22, has faced closure many times.

But Kendrick Postmaster Don Chrystal said he thinks rumors spreading among officials of rural post offices are being "blown out of proportion."

"It's not that alarming," Chrystal said. "Post offices close all the time, for many reasons. It isn't going to happen on a wholesale basis."

Worries were strong enough, however, to prompt the state association of postmasters to call on its members to write Rep. Larry Craig and Sen. Steve Symms about possible closures.

Craig said he has been assured by the Congressional liaison for the United States Postal Service that there are no plans to close any Idaho post offices.

Federal law requires the Postal Service to give written notice of a proposed postal closing to all patrons who would be affected and gives those individuals a right to a hearing and right to appeal the decision.



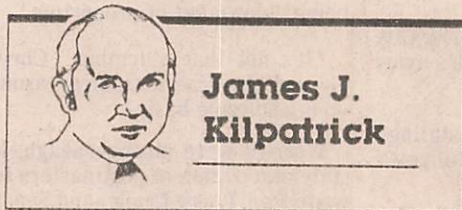


ould the secretary of the world's most powerful cartel, the terror of the West, the scourge of  
prise system, and the revenge of the third world, care to read the minutes of our last  
meeting?"

# murder — mesmerizing

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wholly mesmerizing  
cracker." It is the story  
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rials that followed long  
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**James J.  
Kilpatrick**

with Lady Macbeth, but also with Medea. As  
Euripides told the tale, Medea began her ca-  
reer by killing her brother. She fell in with  
Jason. To hold his love, she tricked the  
daughters of King Pelias into murdering  
their father. Sent into exile in Corinth, she  
winds up by hating Jason. In revenge for his  
deserting her, she poisons Jason's daughter  
by his new wife and completes the horror by

wealthy Mrs. Schreuder, benefactor of the  
New York City Ballet, at the time of her  
arrest and trial. I suppose the Schreuder  
case was big news in New York, and certain-  
ly big news in Utah, but the story never  
reached the boondocks in Virginia. I will not  
spoil the suspense for equally uninformed  
readers by revealing how the trial of  
Frances turned out.

I have said it a good many times publicly,  
and remark it again here, that my beloved  
adversary of "60 Minutes" was out of her  
element in TV. Shana is a writer. She is the  
best court reporter in the country, the best  
anywhere since Rebecca West covered the  
Nuremberg trials. Her previous books on the  
Patty Hearst case and the trial of Jean Har-  
ris are classics in their field.